

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1.(Amended) A method for processing mass mailings by using sorting machines which have at least one material input and a distributing device for distributing the mailings at distribution points in accordance with the distribution information, characterized in that the individual mailings (~~1~~) of a mass mailing are shrink-wrapped at the sender in strips of film (~~4, 5~~), hanging together to form a strip of bags, are dispatched hanging together in this way in a strip of bags and, at the respective destination, are threaded as a strip of bags into the sorting machine by a transport device (~~10~~) belonging to the material input, and are then separated from one another by means of a separating device (~~15~~), and in that, after that, by means of an acceleration device (~~16~~), the gaps between the film bags (~~8~~) necessary for the further processing in the sorting machine are produced.

2.(Amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that, at the sender, in order to produce a strip of bags, the mailings of the mass mailing are led one after another between two endless film strips (~~4, 5~~) unwound from rolls (~~3~~) and belonging to a packaging unit (~~7~~), in which they are shrink-wrapped completely without subdividing the film strips.

3.(Amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the shrink-wrapped mailings hanging together are stored in fan-fold form in appropriate transport containers (~~9~~) and are transported to the destination.

4.(Original) The method as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the shrink-wrapped mailings hanging together are stored in roll form and are transported to the destination.

5.(Amended) The method as claimed in claim 1 ~~or 2~~, characterized in that the strip of bags with the shrink-wrapped mailings (~~1~~) is provided with perforations at the sides, and the threading

transport device (~~10~~) of the material input of the sorting machines has transport gear wheels (~~12~~) which engage in the perforations.

6.(Amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that, following shrink-wrapping, each film bag (8) is provided with an address sticker or imprint.

7.(Original) The method as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that transparent films are used.

8.(Amended) A device for carrying out the method as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the material input of the sorting machines has a transport device (~~10~~) for threading the strip of bags with the shrink-wrapped mailings (~~1~~), a separating device (~~15~~) for dividing up into individual film bags (8) having mailings, and an acceleration device (~~16~~) for producing the gaps between the film bags (8) necessary for the further processing in the sorting machine.

9.(Amended) The device as claimed in claim 8, characterized in that the threading transport device (~~10~~) of the material input of the sorting machines has transport gear wheels (~~12~~) which engage in lateral perforations in the strip of bags.